



## TOWN OF TEWKSBURY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

### Meeting Minutes October 29, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 7:43 p.m. by David Plunkett, Chairman, at the Pike House (temporary Town Hall). Present were Larry Sanford, Marko Duffy, and Bruce Panilaitis. Also in attendance were Steve Sadwick, Director of Community Development, and Richard Montuori, Town Manager.

Brian Linder, Mike Monahan, and Patricia Lelos were not in attendance.

#### 1) Approval of Meeting Minutes – September 4, 2014

**MOTION:** Mr. Duffy made the motion to approve the September 4, 2014 meeting minutes; seconded by Mr. Sanford and the motion carried 4-0.

#### 2) EDSAT Review

Mr. Sadwick noted that the EDSAT was sent out to the members for their review. Jay Donovan of Northern Middlesex Council of Governments has stated that changes can be made prior to the report being finalized should any of the members feel that any of the information is not accurate. Mr. Duffy noted that there were a few items that he had concerns with. Mr. Duffy will forward his comments to Mr. Sadwick.

Discussion took place on the town's permitting process. Mr. Montuori noted that in his experience, those who do not have their documentation in order, or are trying to cut corners, are the ones that seem to have complaints about the process. Mr. Sadwick feels that many times the town's willingness to work with people is sometimes interpreted as the town trying to slow the process down; rather the burden should be put on the applicant to correct the issue. Mr. Duffy suggested obtaining testimonials from Thermo Fisher and Hawthorne regarding their experiences with the town and putting them on the town's website.

Mr. Plunkett requested any members send their comments on the EDSAT to Mr. Sadwick for consideration.

### **3) Route 38**

Mr. Montuori explained that Kendall Wallace of The Lowell Sun has taken an interest in the town's work along on Route 38. Mr. Wallace has put together a staff to do an insert on feature stories and he would like to do one on Route 38 as he feels the town's approach is unique to the town. Mr. Wallace would like to come out with his staff to interview some of the town's staff, boards and committee, residents, developers, etc. Mr. Montuori noted that the business breakfast will likely take place in late January and Mr. Wallace has been invited to be a featured speaker, along with a representative from the Small Business Association. Discussion took place on the location of the breakfast. Mr. Duffy suggested the showroom at one of the local car dealerships as a location so it would not be a "sit down" event. Mr. Montuori noted that this will be looked at as a possibility.

Mr. Montuori explained that Middlesex 3 will also be hosting two-three seminars for the communities belonging to the coalition. It is expected to be two hour seminar for retail businesses to learn best practices on how to operate their business including marketing, appearance, etc. The goal is to tie this in with the Business Breakfast.

Mr. Montuori noted that he will also be reconnecting with the banks that have expressed interest in participating prior to the events and will be meeting with Enterprise Bank within the next couple weeks. The goal is to focus on all of this after the first of the year.

Mr. Montuori noted that the Planning Board has been working on the Town Center Master Plan Study. Mr. Montuori will be completing the RFP to hire a consultant to begin working on the Master Plan.

Mr. Montuori noted that the Town of Billerica just received a \$2.9 million Mass Works grant for side walk improvements in their town center and along Route 3A. Mr. Montuori would like to look into this further to see if this is something that can be obtained for Route 38.

### **4) Marketing**

Discussion took place on Costar which is a nationwide commercial database for property listings with 1,200 analysts and 200 field reps; 10 of which are located in the Boston area. They have relationships with commercial brokers so that any property that is listed on the market would be in their database. Costar has offered Tewksbury a discount rate to subscribe to their services through the Middlesex 3 coalition. Mr. Sadwick and Mr. Montuori discussed some of the features of the program and benefits of the data that will be received.

Further discussion took place on the business breakfast and how it will be marketed and the events that were held in the past. Mr. Duffy asked if it would be advantageous to invite brokers to the breakfast and it was the consensus that this could be beneficial.

Discussion took place on the Chamber of Commerce and Business Associations. Mr. Montuori noted that all of the communities that are a part of the Middlesex 3 coalition have active business associations. Mr. Panilaitis discussed another model in which the town of Marlborough utilizes where there is an Economic Development Corporation rather than an Economic Development Committee and the businesses have memberships. This is funded through a hotels and meals tax.

Mr. Montuori noted that he will also be meeting with representatives from Stop & Shop regarding positional expansion of Heath Brook Plaza area.

### **Old Business**

There was no old business.

### **New Business**

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for December 3, 2014.

### **Adjourn.**

**MOTION:** Mr. Panilaitis made the motion to adjourn at 8:25 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Sanford and the motion carried 4-0.

*Approved: 1/2/15*

**No documents submitted for 10/29/14 Agenda**